

Federal Highway Administration

Rural Transportation Planning Workshops

Missouri Workshop

Including

Arkansas

Kansas

Nebraska

Oklahoma

FINAL DRAFT

Summer 1999

Dye Management Group, Inc.

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Road mileage data included in this report is from the Federal Highway Administration, 1996, and can be accessed at www.fhwa.dot.gov/ohim/1996/section5.html.

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Missouri Workshop



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Federal Highway Administration

Rural Transportation Planning Workshops

Missouri Workshop



1.0 Introduction

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), assisted by Dye Management Group, Inc., conducted a series of regional rural transportation planning workshops from October 1998 through July 1999. The Missouri Department of Transportation hosted the eighth regional workshop on May 12-13, in Kansas City.

These workshops were structured to allow the exchange of success stories and dialogue between neighboring states and their representatives on how to make rural transportation planning effective. In addition, the workshops were used to assemble information on how local elected officials are involved in the statewide transportation planning process. Officials from Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma, including planning representatives, district/ county engineers, local elected officials, rural planning organizations, economic development agencies, tribal governments, departments of transportation, and rural transit operators were invited to attend. The information gathered at the Missouri workshop is presented for each state individually. Overall workshop findings and conclusions follow the state summaries.

1.1 Objectives

The purpose of the workshops was to foster dialogue and the exchange of ideas, not formal presentations. The objectives of the workshops were to:

- Explore and promote effective ways to involve rural officials in the statewide transportation planning process.
- Enable participants to share experiences in rural transportation planning and programming.
- Build relationships among participants that can form the basis for future cooperation and coordination.
- Identify the most effective roles and responsibilities for rural transportation providers and users.

- Determine rural transportation needs and issues that are being addressed by planning and programming.
- Identify best practice planning techniques used in developing successful rural projects.
- Obtain information for a report to Congress on how responsive state transportation plans and the statewide transportation planning process are to rural concerns and how rural officials are involved in the planning process.

These objectives were achieved by working through an agenda of discussion topics. Workshop participants were asked to come prepared to provide input around specific questions that they were given in advance.

1.2 Discussion Topics

Five principal discussion topics were addressed in the workshop. Knowledgeable individuals from each state, from both the state department of transportation perspective and the local rural perspective, were asked to address these discussion topics. The topics were:

- **The Process and the Outcome: How Planning for Rural Areas Is Conducted**

This topic covered the following questions:

- How is planning for rural areas conducted?
- How are rural transportation needs addressed in the development of the statewide transportation improvement program?
- How are rural officials involved in decision making?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses in your state?

- **Jurisdictional Roles, Responsibilities, and Funding**

This topic covered the following questions:

- What are the jurisdictional roles and responsibilities in your state for planning, programming, and funding improvements in rural areas?
- How are plan decisions funded?

- **Integration/Coordination with Other Plans**

This topic covered the following questions:

- How are local/regional plans coordinated with other plans?

- How are local rural goals balanced against regional/statewide goals and objectives?

- **Success Stories**

This topic covered the following question:

- What success stories do you have of innovative programs and projects that address rural needs?

- **Other Issues**

This topic covered the following question:

- What are the major rural transportation issues facing rural areas in your state, for all modes?

1.3 Participants

State departments of transportation were solicited to host the rural transportation planning workshops. Based upon the response, host states were identified and nearby states were then invited to attend.

Knowledgeable individuals, from both the state department of transportation perspective and the local rural perspective, were invited to attend the workshops. The objective was to have approximately five people from each state, representing a variety of rural transportation stakeholders, actively participate in the workshop forum. Participants included local, state, and federal planning representatives; county engineers and commissioners; local elected officials; councils of governments; regional planning organizations; economic development agencies; tribal governments; and rural transit operators. National organizations represented at the workshops included the:

- Community Transportation Association of America.
- Federal Highway Administration.
- Federal Transit Administration.
- National Association of Counties.
- National Association of County Engineers.
- National Association of Development Organizations.

The local elected officials who participated in the workshops included rural mayors, county commissioners, judges/county executives, public works directors, trustees, and former state legislators.

1.4 Report Structure

The format of this report is based on the workshop objectives and topic areas, as follows:

- The Rural Planning Process.
- Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions.
- Major Planning Issues.
- Identified Strengths and Weaknesses.
- Success Stories.

Each of the participating states are addressed in turn. A list of workshop participants and maps of each of the states are included in the attachments.

2.0 Arkansas

Arkansas contains 158,027 lane miles of roads, 141,246 lane miles of which are rural, and 6,048 of these rural miles are on the National Highway System. Seventy-six percent of rural roads are locally owned. Arkansas' rural transportation planning process is considered to be top-down.

2.1 The Rural Planning Process

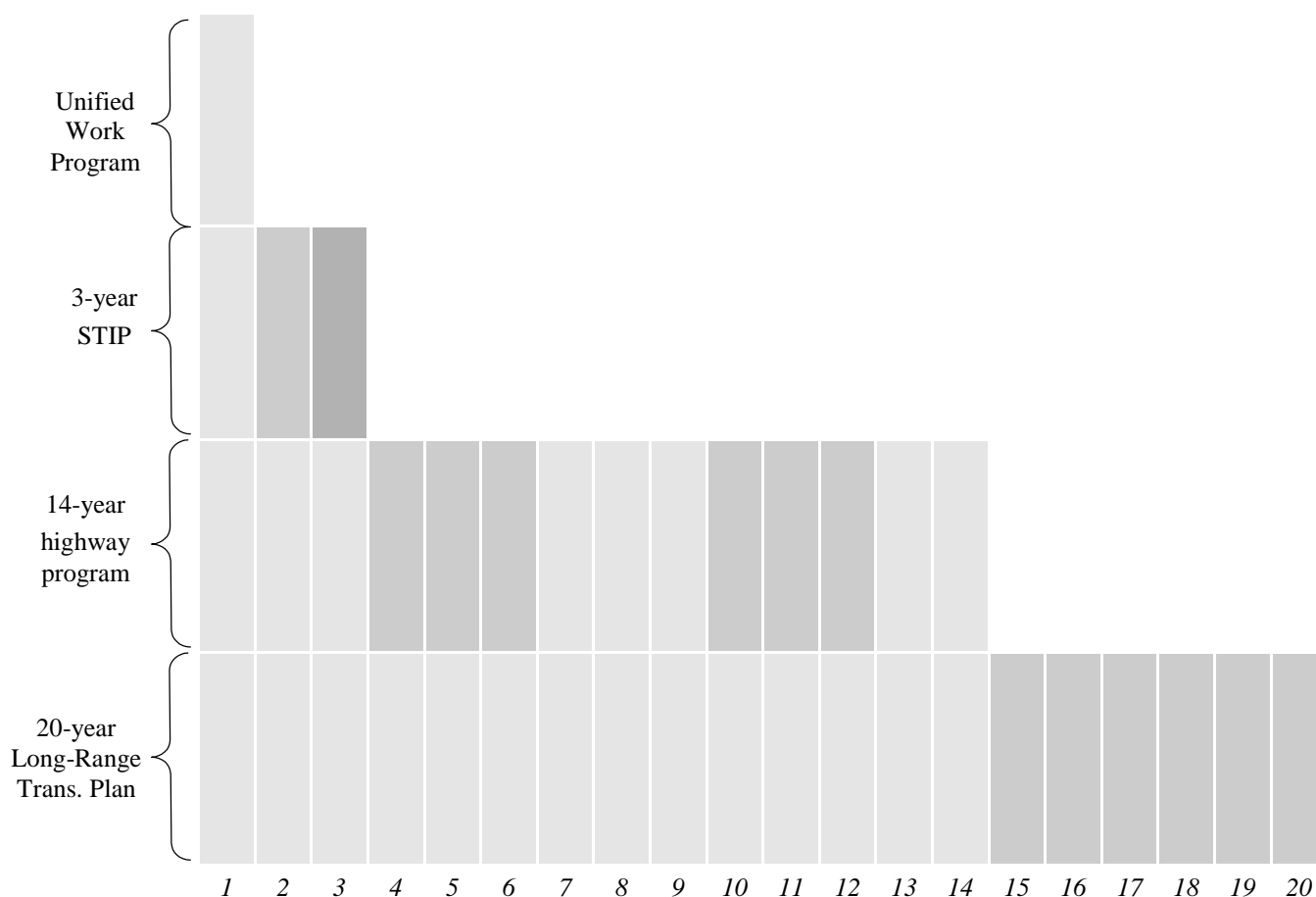
Arkansas has eight planning and development districts that were active in transportation planning and received state funding to do so until two years ago. At that time, the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (ASHTD) revoked those responsibilities and funds due to a change in legislative policy that mandated more effort be put into maintenance and project implementation instead of planning. In response to this change, some metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are expanding their planning boundaries to include rural regions. Many planning and development districts receive a limited amount of funding from other sources, such as the Economic Development Administration, and continue to assist local governments with planning to an extent.

ASHTD conducts some regional planning and fields requests for planning studies through its ten district offices, although most planning is done at the state level in conjunction with the highway commission. There is no funding set aside to hold regional planning meetings and ASHTD no longer funds city street plans, although a few municipalities conduct planning independently.

Principal Rural Planning Activities

- ASHTD district engineers and highway commissioners informally accept input on projects and needs for the statewide transportation improvement program (STIP).
- A Unified Work Program of projects is developed annually, and is the first year of the three-year STIP.
- The STIP is distributed and posted on the internet for public review.
- The legislature approves the STIP and incorporates it into the 14-year project-based highway program.
- ASHTD and the highway commission develop a policy-based 20-year long-range transportation plan separately from the STIP.

Exhibit 2a illustrates Arkansas' transportation planning process.

Exhibit 2a: Rural Planning Integration in Arkansas***Local Elected Official Involvement***

Local elected officials may participate in the rural transportation planning process by approaching ASHTD planners and highway commissions with needs and suggestions.

2.2 Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions

The highway user revenue fund is distributed to ASHTD (70%), counties (15%), and cities (15%) for further allocation.

ASHTD allocates its funding on a competitive, project-by-project basis for work both on and off the state system. Most money is spent for preservation of the system.

Counties spend their funds at the discretion of the county judge. Counties can also apply for per capita funding, and for approximately \$20 million in state aid.

2.3 Major Planning Issues

The following major rural planning issues were identified during the workshop.

- There is little, if any, land use planning.

Land use planning used to be handled by the planning and development districts, and is now generally avoided by the state due to strong sentiments against it and growth management policies. There is no funding set aside for land use planning, either. However, minimal land use planning is conducted by MPOs.

2.4 Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the workshop.

Strengths

- There is a high level of connectivity between local elected officials, transportation officials, organizations, and the public, and no one is far from the ear of a district planner or commissioner.
- When provided the opportunity with formal meetings, hundreds of local elected officials and citizens respond to provide input.

Weaknesses

- The highway commission was established as an all-encompassing transportation body, resulting in little distribution of planning power.
- Before the program was stopped, Arkansas' planning and development districts received only \$200,000 a year for planning efforts, yet conducted many useful studies and master road plans in conjunction with ASHTD.
- No regional meetings are held by ASHTD to formally gather public input on projects and planning.
- Almost all planning is conducted at the state level by ASHTD, and there is little knowledge of street planning work or integration with plans developed by local units of government.

2.5 Success Stories

A recent fuel tax increase and bond measure is the result of a successful public outreach program. In 1998 the highway commission and ASHTD sponsored 16 regional meetings

to present information on statewide needs studies. The state already determined \$7 billion in needs, and the meeting participants identified another \$7 billion in needs. However, the participants – which included 100-200 local elected officials and citizens at each meeting – preferred that the needs be set aside, and that instead the current funding program be accelerated and the interstate system rehabilitated. Due to this consensus and educational effort, the tax and bond were passed.

3.0 Kansas

Kansas contains 271,400 lane miles of roads, 249,440 lane miles of which are rural, and 8,524 of these rural miles are on the National Highway System. Ninety-one percent of rural roads are locally owned. Kansas' rural transportation planning process is considered to be a blend of top-down and bottom-up methods.

3.1 The Rural Planning Process

Kansas has five local development districts that do not have formal transportation planning responsibilities or roles. However, municipalities and counties have an active role in planning and project prioritization, and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) headquarters assists cities and counties to develop five-year plans. KDOT also plans regionally through its six district offices. KDOT currently has two staff at headquarters dedicated to public involvement, with plans to place one staff in each district for the same. Every municipality and county must submit a description of the public involvement process they used before approving their five-year plan to the state.

KDOT generally plans for corridors, and has created technical and advisory committees to assist with this planning. There are many public meetings and a high level of involvement from city and county staff and local elected officials.

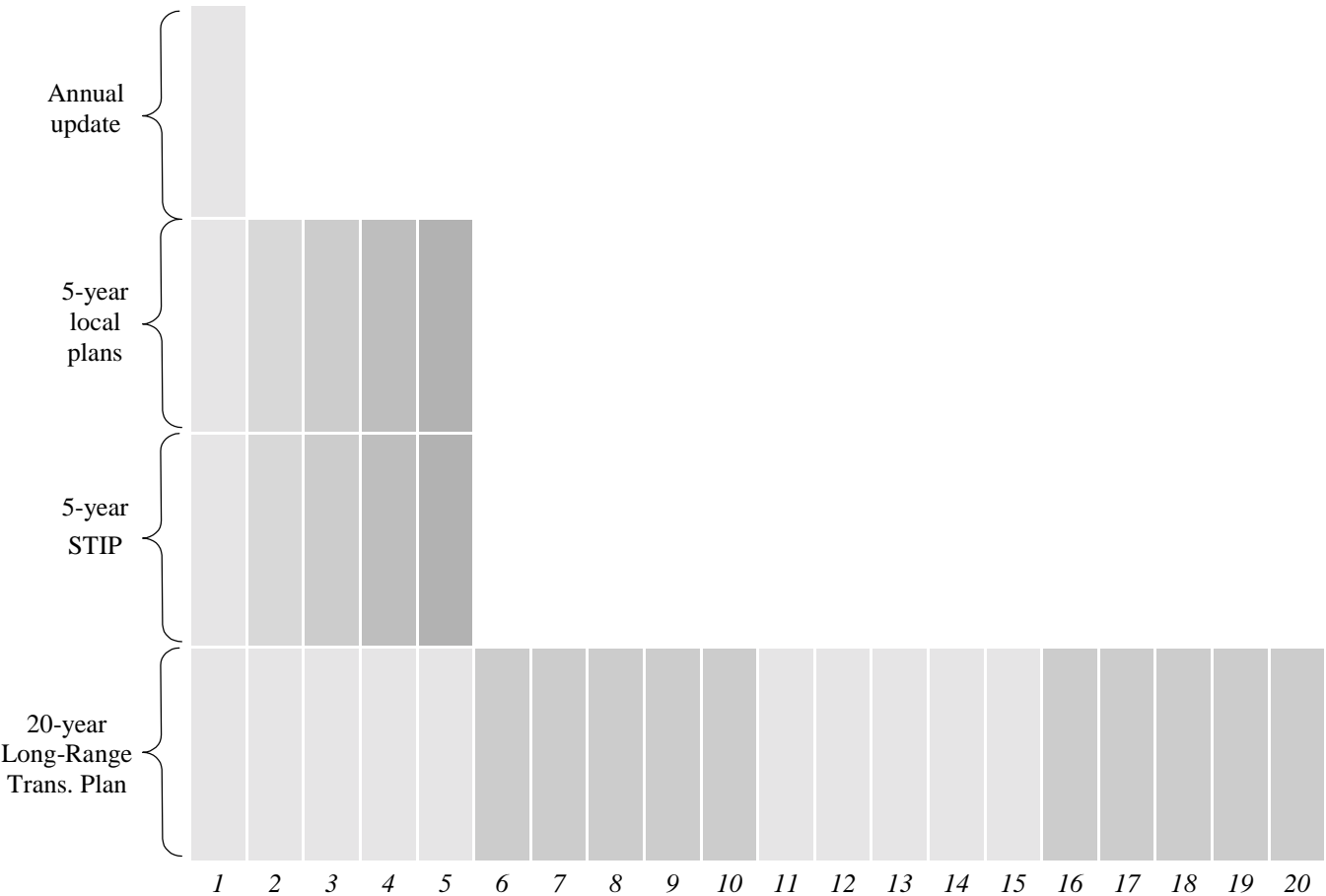
The Kansas Public Transit Association also has consolidated planning districts, which are distinct from KDOT's and conduct their own project prioritization and funding distribution systems. Previously, transit planning was conducted separately by each of the 102 counties in conjunction with KDOT, but now two staff coordinate with the transit association.

Principal Rural Planning Activities

- Monthly meetings are held by the Kansas Public Transit Association to discuss needs and prioritize projects. Meetings are also regularly held by KDOT, technical committees, and advisory committees to discuss corridor planning.
- Local projects are prioritized at the local level and approved by the county commission. Counties must also submit an annual engineer's report on needs and projects that were completed in the past year, and an outline of their public involvement process.
- Once a year, KDOT accepts five-year project plans from cities and counties for evaluation. The Highway Advisory Commission selects projects for funding and advances them to the STIP.
- The five-year construction STIP aligns projects for preservation, modernization, and system enhancement.

Exhibit 3a illustrates Kansas’ transportation planning process.

Exhibit 3a: Rural Planning Integration in Kansas



Local Elected Official Involvement

Local elected officials may participate in the transportation planning process at the municipal and county level, by joining advisory and technical committees for corridor development, and by attending Local Technical Assistance Program workshops. Local officials are also encouraged to discuss proposed projects with their KDOT district engineer before applying for funding and advancement to the STIP.

3.2 Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions

Federal surface transportation program funds are distributed by formula, with 25-30% of the funding going to cities and counties and the remainder to KDOT. Counties and municipalities receive 40.5% of state fuel tax revenues through the Special City and

County Highway Fund, which disburses the money directly on a quarterly basis. The remainder is used on regional and statewide projects. In addition, counties and municipalities may apply to KDOT for funding from one of two programs:

- The Substantial Maintenance Program funds projects that protect the public's safety and investment in the existing transportation system.
 - The City Connecting Link set-aside program provides funding for resurfacing projects on city streets that connect two rural portions of the state highway system. KDOT will provide up to \$150,000 per project, matched at 25-50% depending upon population.
 - The Safety set-aside program provides funding for the improvement of intersections or spot locations – such as deceleration lanes, raised islands, or pavement markings – on state highway or City Connecting Link routes.
- The Major Modification Program funds projects that improve the service, comfort, capacity, economy, and safety of the existing transportation system.
 - The Geometric Improvement Program provides funding for projects to help cities widen roads, eliminate hills or curves, and add extra lanes on City Connecting Links. KDOT provides up to 100% of funding based on city population.
 - The Economic Development Program provides funding for highway and bridge construction projects on federally-eligible roads that enhance economic development. KDOT provides up to 75% of funding for these projects.

Winning applications are selected by the Highway Advisory Commission each spring and programmed two to three years in advance. In order to stretch resources, KDOT does not fund preliminary engineering or right-of-way activities.

In addition, a virtual toll credit from the federal New Jersey Bill allows KDOT to receive a dollar-for-dollar funding credit for construction money spent by the turnpike authority. The credit becomes federal aid money and can be spent on any non-maintenance federal-level projects or as a match.

3.3 Major Planning Issues

The following major rural planning issues were identified during the workshop.

- The legislature enacted a quantitative, formula-based allocation of funds in order to standardize the project selection process and prevent county engineers from making poor decisions.

This process has proven to be both a strength and weakness for KDOT. While the formula-based system can objectively reinforce a claim for needs and higher

prioritization, it can also allow needed projects that don't fit the criteria to be pushed aside and stay shelved due to the lack of engineers' influence. The process excels at advancing needs on the existing system, but not future needs.

- Maintenance has lapsed on the rail lines since the class one railroads abandoned them and the short lines took over.

KDOT is looking at how to catch up on maintenance and make the rail lines profitable. If the short line railroads aren't available then grain has to be trucked, impacting highway usage. KDOT is evaluating a loan program to assist the railroads, and has formed a task force with the Department of Agriculture and governor to address these needs.

- Like many midwestern states, KDOT avoids land use planning issues.

Land use is controlled at the local level, and there are strong sentiments against intervention. However, KDOT is taking steps to educate citizens and jurisdictions about the cost of not taking preventative action in a corridor before a large business arrives. Towns are tempted by growth, and KDOT's message is that they cannot allow development to degrade the system. They can do this by having plans on the books.

3.4 Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the workshop.

Strengths

- The Local Technical Assistance Program sponsors workshops for local elected officials and transportation planners on the principles of access management, how to coordinate with local jurisdictions, and how to handle growth. As a result, municipalities are working with KDOT and coordinating land use and corridor plans to encourage business, yet improve the highway corridor. Interest in the program is spreading.
- The consolidated transit districts have simplified the grant process from several hundred applications to a few dozen by prioritizing at the district level.
- There is significant inter-county cooperation and communication.
- KDOT's public involvement program started internally so all staff would be sensitive to outreach issues. The program also encourages engineers to talk directly with residents, and not just with staff and elected officials.

- By funding and conducting their own preliminary engineering and right-of-way activities, cities and counties see their projects implemented faster. Very few counties are unable to cover these costs.
- KDOT attends the Rural Development Council's meetings to discuss a range of issues impacting rural regions, including transportation.

Weaknesses

- Many counties fail to turn in their annual county engineer's report because they see little use for it once it reaches the state level.
- Turning right-of-way back to the counties is a controversial issue and it's uncertain who will have ownership in the future.
- Local development districts have "faded away" and aren't a viable planning resource.

3.5 Success Stories

- An organization called Economic Lifelines has played a critical role in the success of KDOT's public meetings. Economic Lifelines is comprised of people who recognize the importance of transportation – county commissioners, municipalities, chambers of commerce, citizens, etc. – and work to bring other organizations together to discuss planning issues. As a result of their efforts for the initial highway plan and comprehensive transportation plan, more counties are planning and reaching out to businesses and the public for the development of their five-year plans.
- The Governor's Transportation 2000 Initiative held 12 meetings across the state, with over 2,500 people giving 500 presentations on needs. It was a grassroots effort with unprecedented cooperation and consensus on needs and priorities. The testimonies and report from the meetings are posted on the internet.

4.0 Missouri

Missouri contains 251,337 lane miles of roads, 215,613 lane miles of which are rural, and 9,554 of these rural miles are on the National Highway System. Seventy percent of rural roads are locally owned. Missouri's rural transportation planning process is considered to be a blend of top-down and bottom-up methods.

4.1 The Rural Planning Process

Missouri has 19 regional planning commissions that were given formal transportation planning roles in 1993 when the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) required that they create transportation advisory committees, consisting of local elected officials and other transportation stakeholders, to meet regularly with MoDOT staff. In 1995 their duties were expanded to include an annual work program with specific duties to conduct for MoDOT. These agreements act as contracts with the regional commissions to gather planning input, conduct studies, develop public involvement, and do other transportation-related work. The regional commissions also work with local jurisdictions on their planning efforts and use the information to prioritize regional needs.

MoDOT reimburses each organization approximately \$27,000 annually for planning expenditures, matched locally at 20%. Planning commissions must submit a bill and progress report each quarter. Most regional planning commissions cannot afford a transportation planner, but can seek assistance through the technical transfer program or from MoDOT district planners. Regional commissions that can afford planners often "rent a staff" to local municipalities.

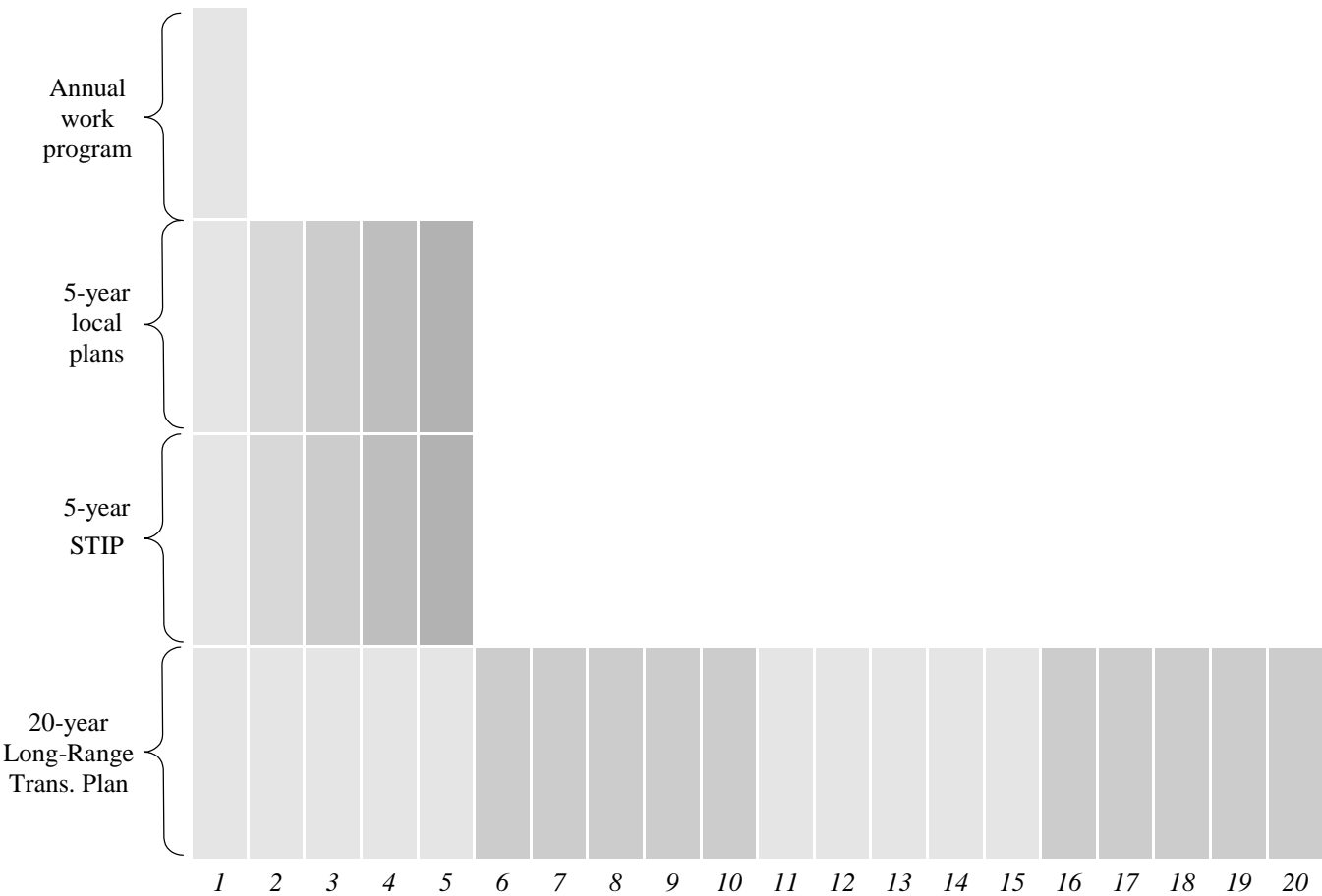
MoDOT is guided by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. Commissioners are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate for six-year terms. No more than three commissioners may be of the same political party. The MoDOT director, chief counsel, and secretary to the commission are appointed by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. All other appointments are done by the director with the approval of the commission.

Principal Rural Planning Activities

- The regional planning commissions meet regularly with local governments to determine needs and prioritize projects. This information is forwarded to MoDOT district planners at other regularly-scheduled meetings.
- Counties submit their five-year transportation plans to MoDOT. The state updates the five-year STIP annually based upon the county plans and input from the regional planning commissions. The STIP is then approved by the highway commission and becomes part of the long-range transportation plan.

Exhibit 4a illustrates Missouri's transportation planning process.

Exhibit 4a: Rural Planning Integration in Missouri



Local Elected Official Involvement

Local elected officials are encouraged to participate in the rural transportation planning process by joining the transportation advisory committee of their regional planning commission and developing local plans. Officials may also be appointed to terms on the state highway commission.

4.2 Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions

By state law, fuel tax revenue can only be used for highways. Of the transportation funds, 15% is allocated to cities, 15% to counties, and 70% to the state. This typically amounts to a couple million dollars per county. Counties can also receive County Aid Road and Truck funds.

MoDOT maintains almost all highways, including 17,700 miles of rural minor collectors.

4.3 Major Planning Issues

The following major rural planning issues were identified during the workshop.

- There is little land use planning with which MoDOT can coordinate.

Land use planning, if any, is conducted at the local level. However, there is increasing interest in zoning and land use planning, especially in areas that previously fought such programs, due to large commercial farm operations that are being established. MoDOT is developing growth recommendations and implementation practices in response to these concerns, and is also working with four other state departments on broader land management and smart growth policies.

- While many states are consolidating their small, county-level transit districts and creating larger, unified service areas, Missouri is moving the opposite way.

Regional planning commissions used to receive Section 5311 funding, but no longer do. Transit is currently organized at the county level, with many services overlapping. Transit providers and stakeholders are working toward a compromise between the two methods.

4.4 Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the workshop.

Strengths

- Partnering with MoDOT enables the regional planning commissions to leverage funding from other federal and state agencies and complete projects that otherwise wouldn't be implemented.
- Through the regional planning commissions the counties prioritize bridge projects, pool their funds, and distribute the money on a most-needed basis.
- Regional planning commissions often do pro-bono mapping work to assist with MoDOT plans.
- MoDOT is evaluating its access management policies and has hired consultants to develop a new access management program.

Weaknesses

- Areas that don't belong to a regional planning commission do not receive information from a formal chain of communication and are therefore at a disadvantage in project selection. These regions also tend to receive less state funding.

- MoDOT has been the object of criticism from the legislature and public for being \$19 billion short on their current transportation plan.
- The Division of Transit no longer requires agencies seeking transit funds to meet with the local elected officials in the areas they intend to serve or to be in a plan.

4.5 Success Stories

- The regional planning commissions facilitate communication with local governments and citizens, and have made great strides in educational efforts and MoDOT public relations.
- MoDOT participates in three efforts to improve cooperation among agencies and benefit rural Missouri: the Missouri Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, the Missouri Rural Opportunities Council, and the Department of Economic Development monthly meeting program. Previously, MoDOT would not know about a planned development and its need for transportation infrastructure until after construction, but now can plan in advance and be more prepared.

5.0 Nebraska

Nebraska contains 187,914 lane miles of roads, 176,701 lane miles of which are rural, and 6,642 of these rural miles are on the National Highway System. Eighty-eight percent of rural roads are locally owned. Nebraska's rural transportation planning process is considered to be a blend of top-down and bottom-up methods.

5.1 The Rural Planning Process

Nebraska has few economic development organizations with no past or present transportation planning roles and responsibilities. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) conducts planning for rural regions through its eight district offices, and relies on its district engineers to have close ties with local elected officials. Local governments plan with the assistance of NDOR, and counties are required to develop one- and six-year plans. NDOR also plans for 55 transit districts through a public transportation coordinating committee.

NDOR works in conjunction with the Nebraska Highway Commission to obtain input. The commission is comprised of a representative from each of the eight field districts. The representatives are appointed by the governor for six-year terms, and these appointments are approved by the legislature. The highway commission serves in an advisory capacity and as a channel for citizens to voice their opinions concerning the state highway system.

Principal Rural Planning Activities

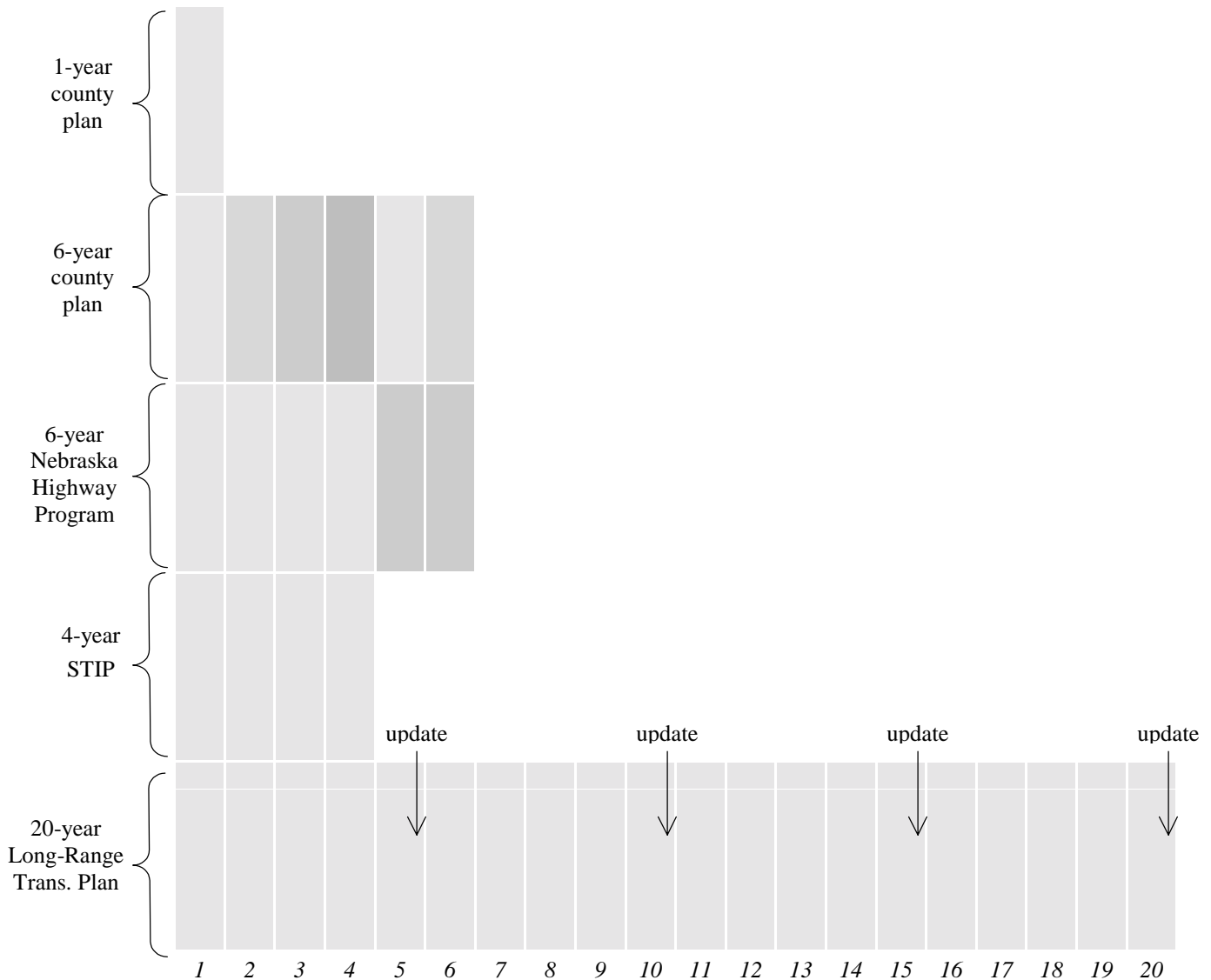
- Local governments and counties identify needs and prioritize local projects.
- Each year, the 93 counties submit their one-year and six-year plans to the Board of Classifications and Standards for approval. The members of the board are approved by the governor.
- County plans that are approved for funding become part of the six-year Nebraska Highway Program – the first four years of which are the STIP – after being prioritized at the regional level by the NDOR district engineer. Regional and statewide projects are prioritized by NDOR.
- NDOR holds annual meetings in each of the eight highway districts to gather input on the STIP. It also presents a needs report to the legislature every year.
- After final approval, open houses and public meetings are held to hear citizen concerns about project development.

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- The 20-year long-range transportation plan is updated every five years. NDOR holds numerous meetings across the state to gather input on the policy-based plan.

Exhibit 5a illustrates Nebraska's transportation planning process.

Exhibit 5a: Rural Planning Integration in Nebraska



Local Elected Official Involvement

Local elected officials are encouraged to participate in the rural transportation planning process by developing local, county, and regional plans. They also provide input to their

NDOR district engineer and maintain open lines of communication regarding projects. Local officials can join organizations such as the Rural Development Commission to further increase their involvement.

5.2 Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions

Federal funding and state fuel tax revenue are allocated to local jurisdictions by similar formulas that are based on road miles, population, agriculture, and several other factors. Of the federal funds, 70% goes to the state and 30% to local governments. Of the local highway fund, half goes to the counties. By law, if an improvement is for local benefit then local funds must pay for it.

The Nebraska Highway Commission distributes the State Highway System Funds, which are a combination of state and federal funds. Half goes to primary highways, 25% to the interstate, and 25% to the 600-mile expressway system.

Rural transit systems receive \$1 million annually from the state fuel trust fund, and a small amount from the general fund, in addition to federal funding.

5.3 Major Planning Issues

The following major rural planning issues were identified during the workshop.

- Attempts to convert NDOR to a department of transportation have not been successful. NDOR is the only state to maintain a modal-specific agency.

Despite the conviction to stay a department of roads, NDOR also plans for rail projects and rural transit. NDOR brings together many agencies and modes to discuss the long-range transportation plan and other issues, and participates in multi-agency commissions.

- Nebraska has numerous individual rural transit systems.

Through the public transportation coordinating committee, NDOR has been bringing other state departments and agencies together to discuss common transit needs and to possibly coordinate systems to improve service and reduce expenditures.

- The state's two remaining railroads want to consolidate grain facilities.

Consolidating facilities to ten shuttle train facilities will increase pressure on the state highway system, although it would be beneficial to the shipping industry. NDOR and the University of Nebraska are conducting a study to see where the truck traffic would occur and how to plan for improvements.

5.4 Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the workshop.

Strengths

- NDOR holds open houses very early on in project development where project engineers can speak with citizens one-on-one. In addition to making residents feel more at ease about voicing their opinions, this enhances NDOR's public image. When NDOR holds a public meeting on the project later on, the process is smoother because they have already addressed the public's concerns.
- Counties without planning and zoning regulations can adopt those of a neighboring county until they establish their own guidelines.
- NDOR and several other agencies have consolidated their services so that truckers have a "one-stop shop" to deal with their issues.

Weaknesses

- There is some difficulty in coordinating between cities and counties. Larger cities may plan for up to a mile beyond their boundaries and sometimes do so without consulting with the county, causing a conflict in planned improvements.
- Politics can still influence transportation planning. The legislature mandated a system of expressways throughout the state to connect all cities with populations of 5,000 or more with the interstate, but determining the priority cities was problematic. In addition, the legislature failed to provide promised funding to continue work on the system.
- Value-added crops and diversification have made rail freight even more difficult to manage and validate.

5.5 Success Stories

The Rural Development Commission, comprised of individuals appointed by the governor and approved by the legislature, is an advisory board that educates the legislature on rural issues and perspectives. Within it are a number of task forces that deal with topics affecting rural Nebraska and work with municipalities to better use their resources. The task forces also try to dovetail transportation planning with economic development. The commission has been successful in helping local governments partner with their legislative representatives.

6.0 Oklahoma

Oklahoma contains 232,158 lane miles of roads, 202,974 lane miles of which are rural, and 8,782 of these rural miles are on the National Highway System. Eighty-eight percent of rural roads are locally owned. Oklahoma's rural transportation planning process is considered to be top-down.

6.1 The Rural Planning Process

Oklahoma has 11 councils of governments that have no formal roles in transportation planning, although they are working to gain more responsibilities. The councils generally meet once a month and include county commissioners, city managers, and representatives from various agencies. They recently received limited state funds and grants to supplement their federal, general planning funds. Occasionally the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) contracts with the councils for transportation-related projects.

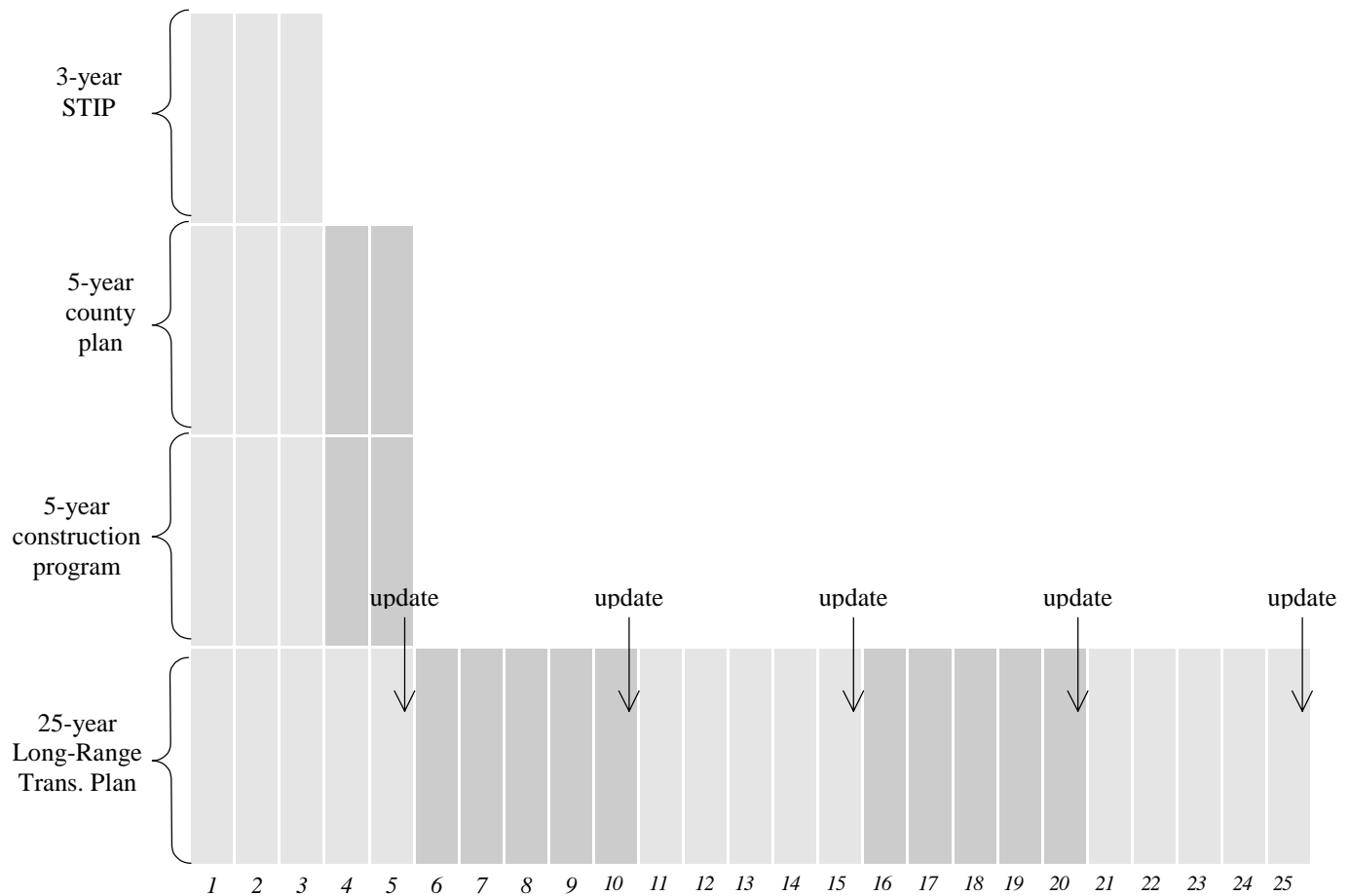
The majority of rural transportation planning is conducted by the counties and ODOT. All 77 counties develop five-year plans in conjunction with local jurisdictions; most public involvement takes place at this level. The Local Government Coordination unit assists counties in the development of their plans. The central ODOT office develops the STIP and five-year construction program based on the county plans and in coordination with the district engineers. The 25-year long-range transportation plan is corridor-based, and consists of both projects and policy.

Principal Rural Planning Activities

- Municipalities and counties identify needs and prioritize projects at the local level, holding public meetings as needed.
- Each year, counties submit their five-year plans to ODOT for approval.
- The ODOT central office updates the five-year construction program, taking into consideration the county plans. The first three years of the construction program become the STIP.
- The STIP is updated every other year. ODOT holds public meetings across the state – at least one in each district – to gather input and comments.
- The STIP and construction program become part of the 25-year long-range plan, which is updated about every five years. At that time, numerous statewide public input meetings are conducted by ODOT.

Exhibit 6a illustrates Oklahoma's transportation planning process.

Exhibit 6a: Rural Planning Integration in Oklahoma



Local Elected Official Involvement

Local elected officials may participate in the rural transportation planning process by working with their councils of governments, with their counties to conduct local planning, or with ODOT to do corridor planning. Elected officials can also use their influence to affect project prioritization and seek out alternative funding sources.

6.2 Programming and Funding for Rural Area Decisions

The counties receive 2% from fuel tax revenue for maintenance and operations. The counties' share of funding is given to the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma. The commissioners' association distributes the money to the eight transportation districts, which then allocate it to the counties. If the funds aren't used by a certain date, they go back to the district and are reallocated to another county. If no other

county has a project ready to use the funds on, they go back to the association for re-distribution statewide.

An Oklahoma legislator created a program for rural counties, with \$20 million annually to be split between ODOT, water resources, and the councils of governments for distribution. After the first year, ODOT gave their share to the councils to allocate.

6.3 Major Planning Issues

The following major rural planning issues were identified during the workshop.

- Most counties do not have land use, zoning, or comprehensive plans.

There is general opposition to land use and growth regulations. While this has allowed undesired growth to occur in some regions, in other areas incoming business has prompted residents to form coalitions and prevent their establishment.

6.4 Identified Strengths and Weaknesses

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the workshop.

Strengths

- There is significant cooperation between county and tribal planners.
- County commissioners are actively involved in transportation planning efforts at both the local and statewide levels.

Weaknesses

- Planning is sometimes politically driven and not needs-based.
- A large portion of land in Oklahoma belongs to schools or reservations, which is not taxable, but the counties are still responsible for providing transportation infrastructure.
- Many times the state will build a special purposes road but not follow up with its maintenance and repairs.
- Some participants feel that there is poor communication between ODOT and outside organizations. Many counties cite examples of projects starting or roads being rebuilt with no prior notice or consultation.
- Some counties feel that ODOT plans reactively, not proactively.

6.5 Success Stories

A recently passed state law allows for the creation of circuit engineering districts that correlate with the existing transportation districts. Each county can join – so far 70 of 77 counties have signed up – and the legislature has provided \$280,000 in seed money. Eventually the program will be self-supporting and enable the rural counties in a district to conduct business as a government entity engaging in activities such as contracting for services. They will be able to do their own bridge inspections, receive federal funding, and contract with councils of governments.

7.0 Workshop Findings and Conclusions

7.1 Similarities

Consensus was reached by the Missouri workshop participants in many areas, most notably regarding public involvement, project development, and funding. These agreements are listed below.

- When provided with the opportunity, citizens take full advantage of providing input on transportation planning issues.
- Rural planning organizations are an effective tool in educating the public on transportation and development issues.
- Communities are scrambling to develop land use and zoning policies in response to large, commercial farming operations and other business development.
- Communities crave the benefits of economic development, often working contrary to their planning and growth policies.
- Regional planning organizations generally struggle to find sufficient planning funds.
- Planning would be facilitated and accelerated if increased cooperation existed between governmental agencies.

7.2 Differences

Differences between the states were also noted, which tended to center on governmental organization, regulations, and the programming process. These differences are listed below:

- States vary from taking a top-down approach to rural planning – like Arkansas, which acted to stop regional planning efforts – to states that have an aggressively bottom-up approach, such as Missouri.
- Some rural planning organizations cover the entire state and actively develop, plan, and program their projects in conjunction with the department of transportation, while others offer scattered coverage and have no formal responsibilities.
- There is wide variation in the extent to which public input is sought.

Attachment A. Participants

The Missouri Workshop

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Missouri Public Works

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Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils

Stephen Andersen
Strategic Planning
Nebraska Department of Roads

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Planner
Omaha Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

Joe Dunn
Assistant Executive Director
Central Oklahoma Economic Development District

William Gilliland
Assistant Bureau Chief
Kansas Department of Transportation

Bill Hickson
Pawnee County
Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma

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Director of Community & Economic Development
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Green Hills Regional Planning Commission, MO

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Chairman of the Board
Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission

Ron Rogers
Transportation Planning
Federal Highway Administration Resource Center, MO

David Rose
Principal
Dye Management Group, Inc., WA

Gary P. Rosewicz
Marshall County Engineer
President, Kansas County Highway Association

David Schwartz
Transportation Planning
Kansas Department of Transportation

Paul Simms
Staff Planning Engineer, Statewide Planning
Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department

Dennis Slimmer
Asst. to the Director of Planning & Development
Kansas Department of Transportation

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Intermodal and Statewide Planning Division
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Kiowa County
Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma

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Boothel Regional Planning Commission, MO

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Cindy Terwilliger
Deputy Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration, Region VII, MO

Jim Tobaben
Bureau Chief, Bureau of Transportation Planning
Kansas Department of Transportation

Thomas Tucker
Executive Director
Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission

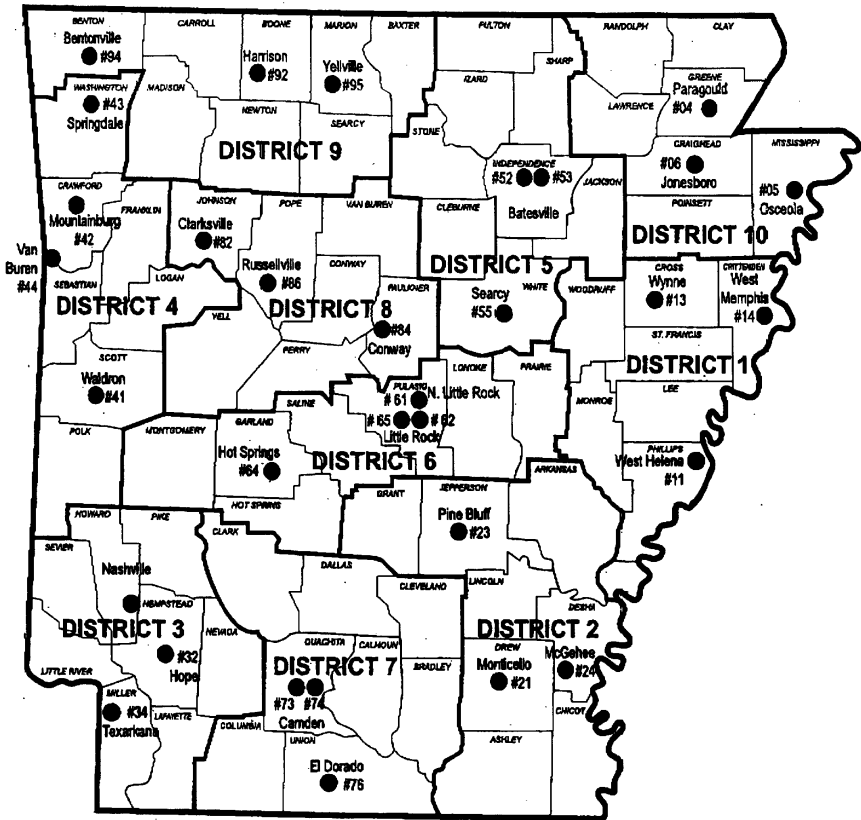
Kent Van Landuyt
Transportation Planning
Missouri Department of Transportation

Linda Yaeger
Executive Director
OATS Public Transportation, MO

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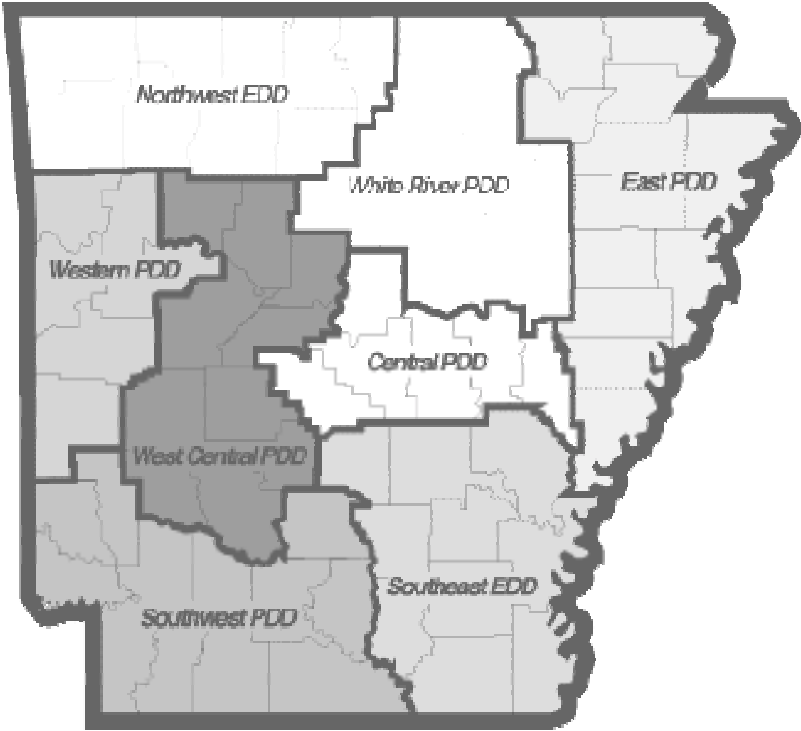
Attachment B. Maps

Arkansas



Highway districts

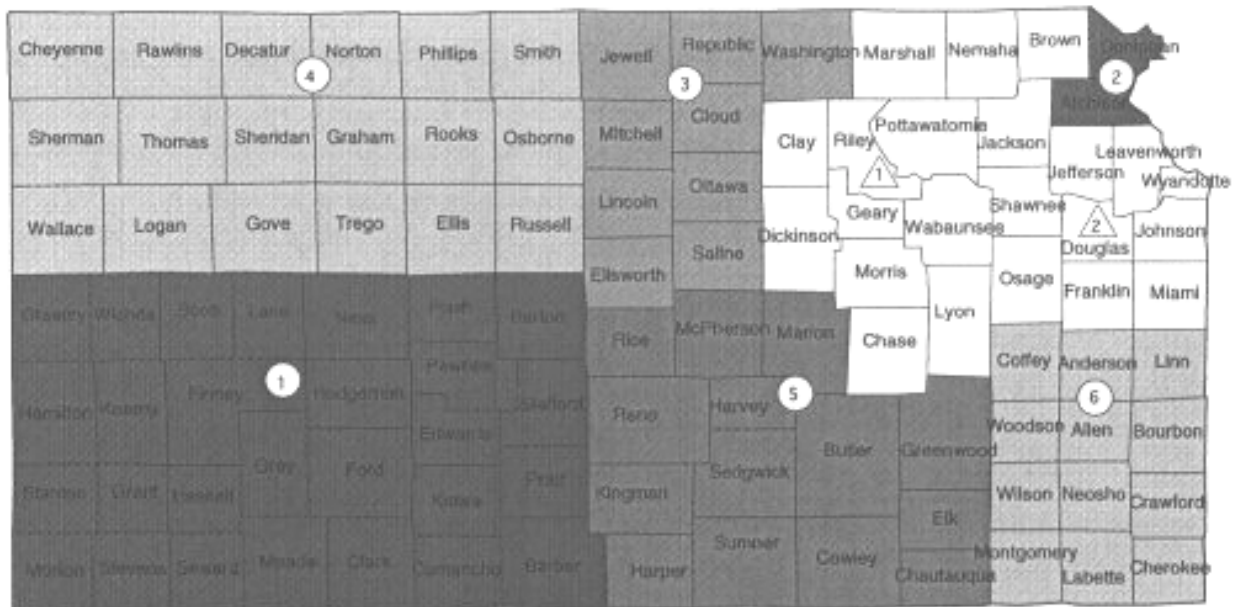
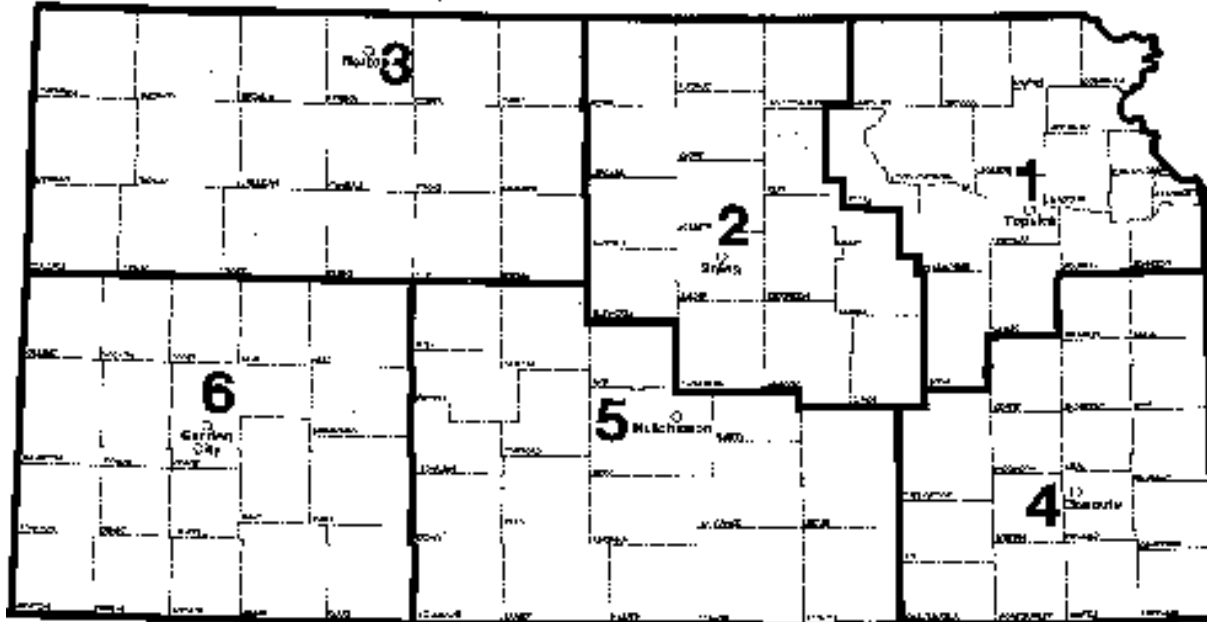
Planning and
development districts



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Kansas

DOT districts

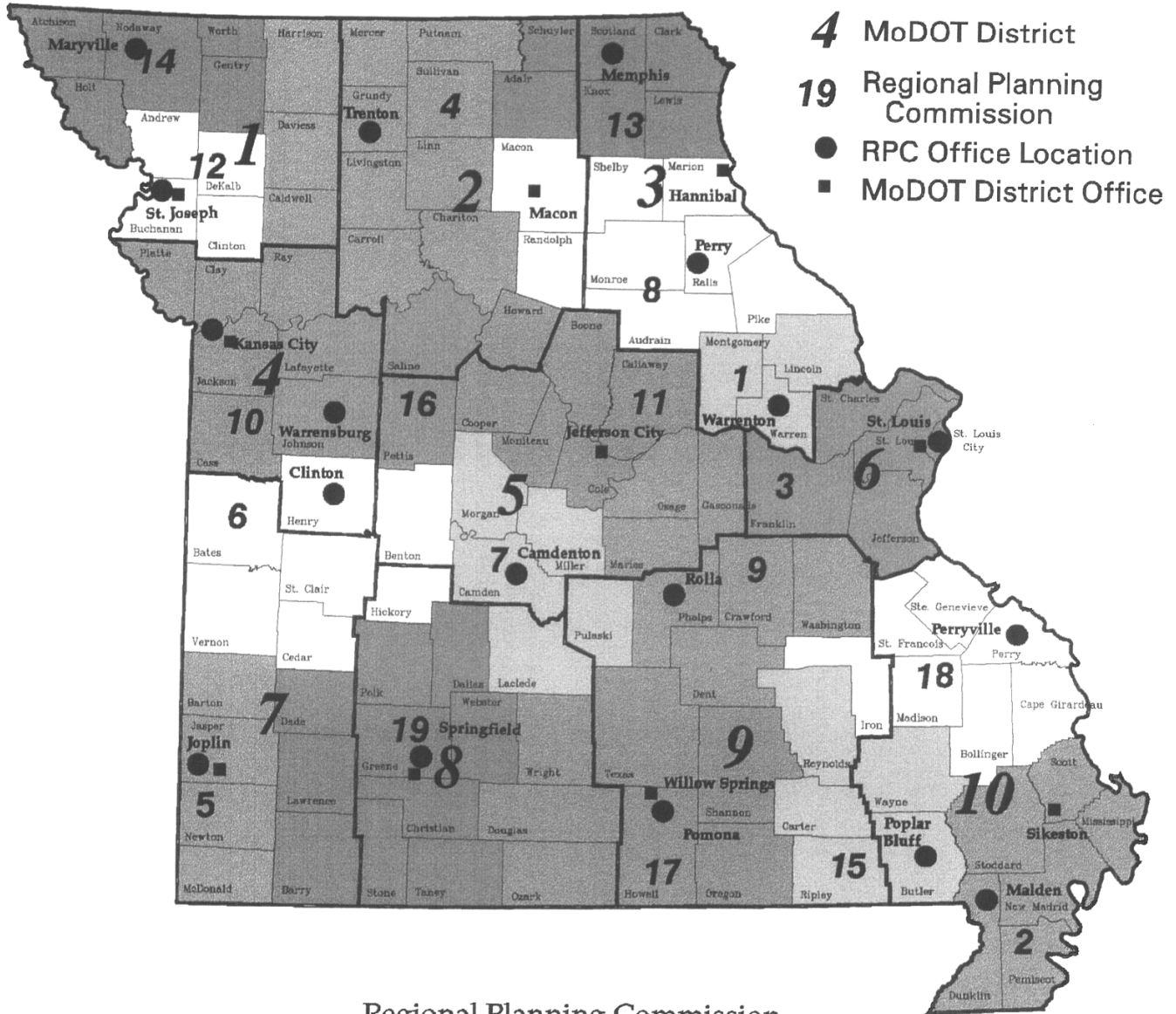


Development districts

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ○—Economic Development Districts | 6. Southeast Kansas R.P.C. |
| 1. Great Plains Dev. Inc. | △—University Centers |
| 2. Mo-Kan Reg. Council (See MO) | 1. Kansas State Univ. |
| 3. North Central R.P.C. | 2. Univ. of Kansas |
| 4. Northwest Kansas P.D.C. | |
| 5. South Central Kansas E.D.D. | |

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Missouri



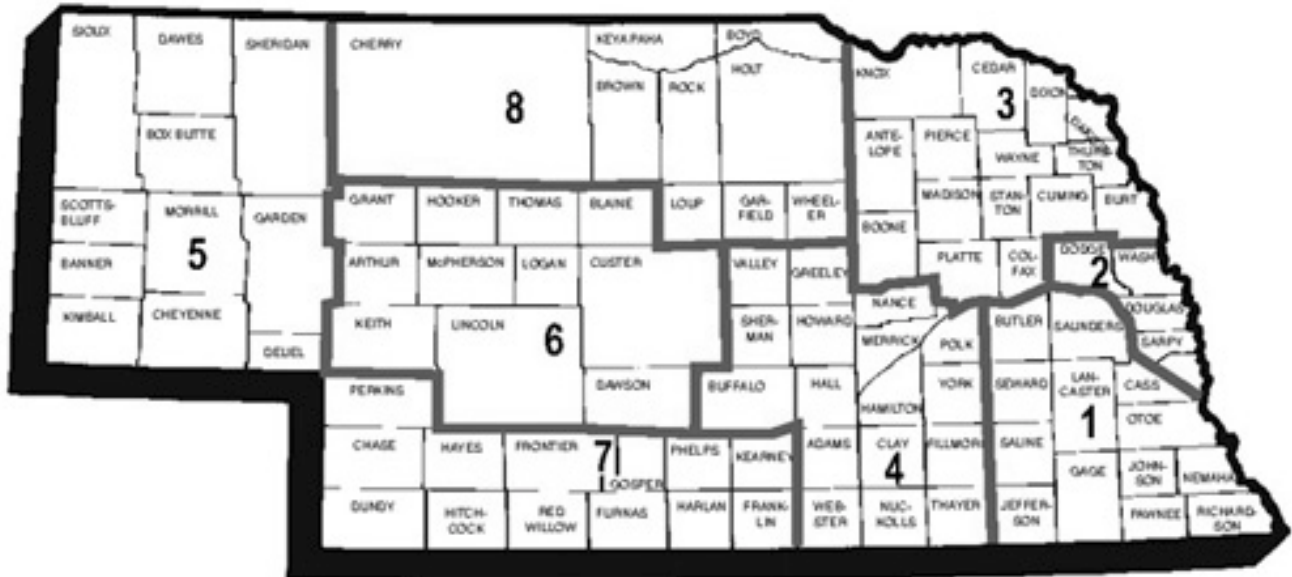
Regional Planning Commission

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Boonslick Regional Planning Commission (314) 456-3473 | 11. Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission |
| 2. Bootheel Regional Planning and Economic Development Council (573) 276-2242 | 12. Mo-Kan Regional Council (816) 233-3144 |
| 3. East-West Gateway Coordinating Council (314) 421-4220 | 13. Northeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission (660) 465-7281 |
| 4. Green Hills Regional Planning Commission (660) 359-5636 | 14. Northwest Missouri Regional Council of Governments (660) 582-5121 |
| 5. Harry S. Truman Coordinating Council (417) 782-3515 | 15. Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission (573) 785-6402 |
| 6. Kaysinger Basin Regional Planning Commission (660) 885-3393 | 16. Inactive |
| 7. Lake of the Ozarks Council of Local Governments (573) 346-5616 | 17. South Central Ozark Council of Governments (417) 256-4226 |
| 8. Mark Twain Regional Council of Governments (573) 565-2203 | 18. Southeast Missouri Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission (573) 547-8357 |
| 9. Meramec Regional Planning Commission (573) 265-2993 | 19. Southwest Missouri Advisory Council of Government (417) 836-6900 |
| 10. Mid-America Regional Council (816) 474-4240 | |

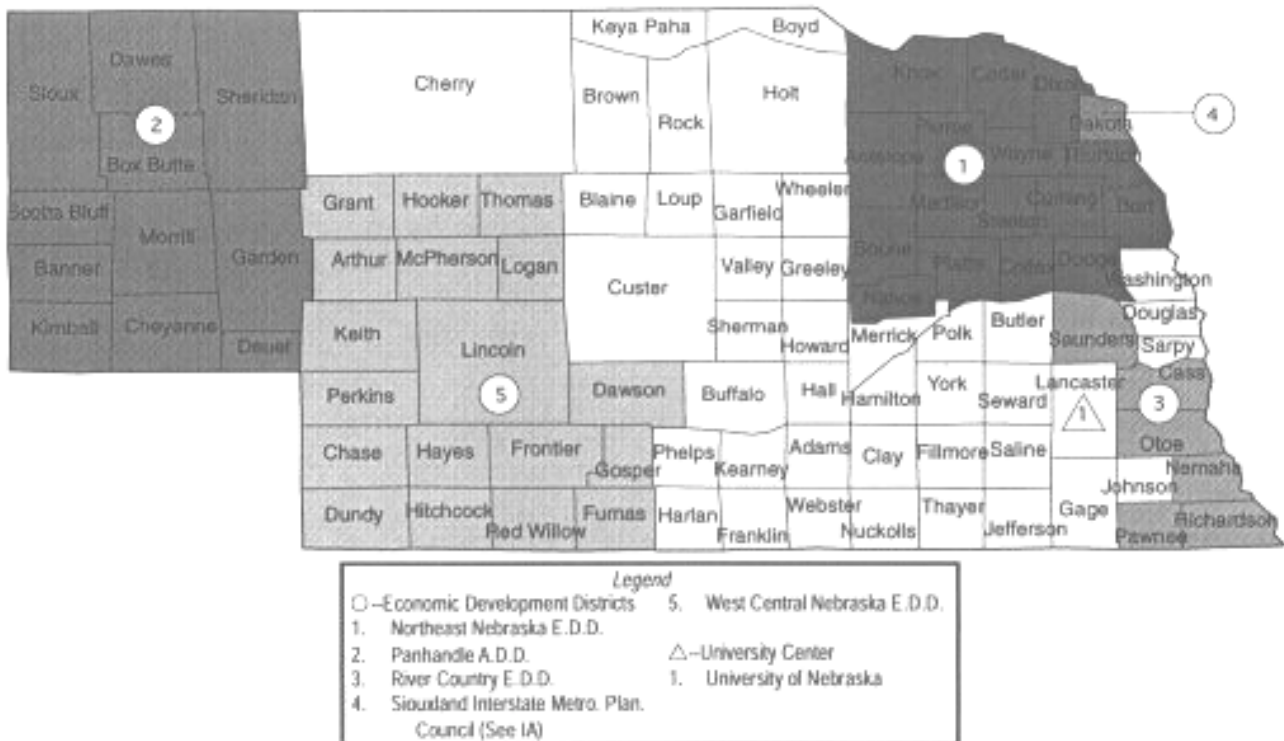
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Nebraska

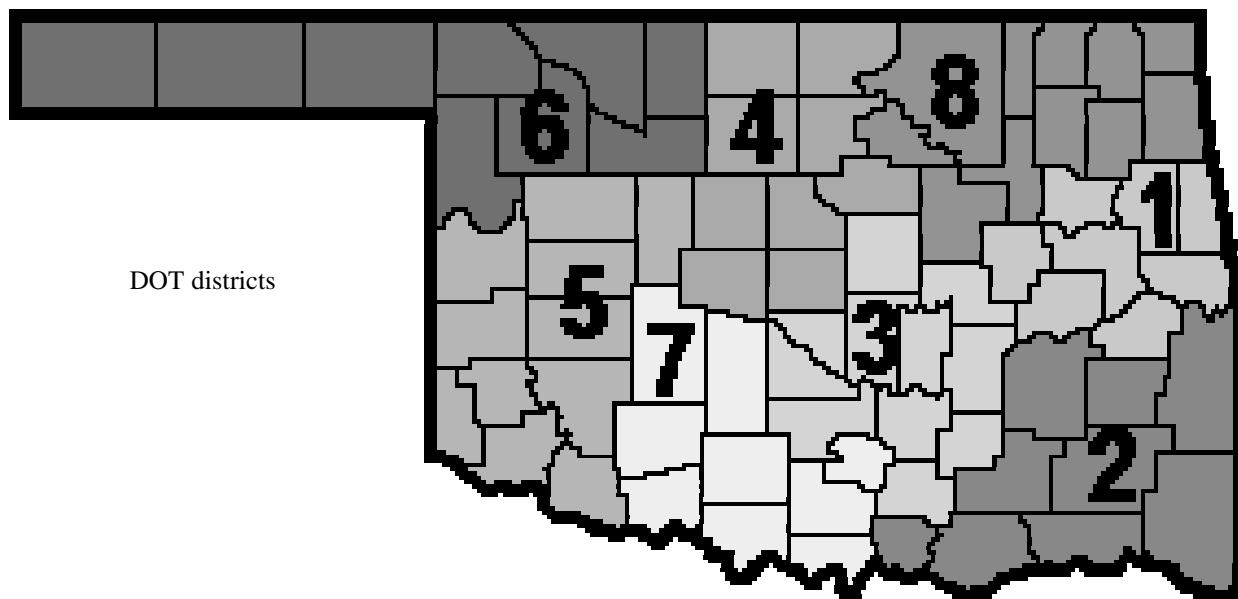
DOT districts



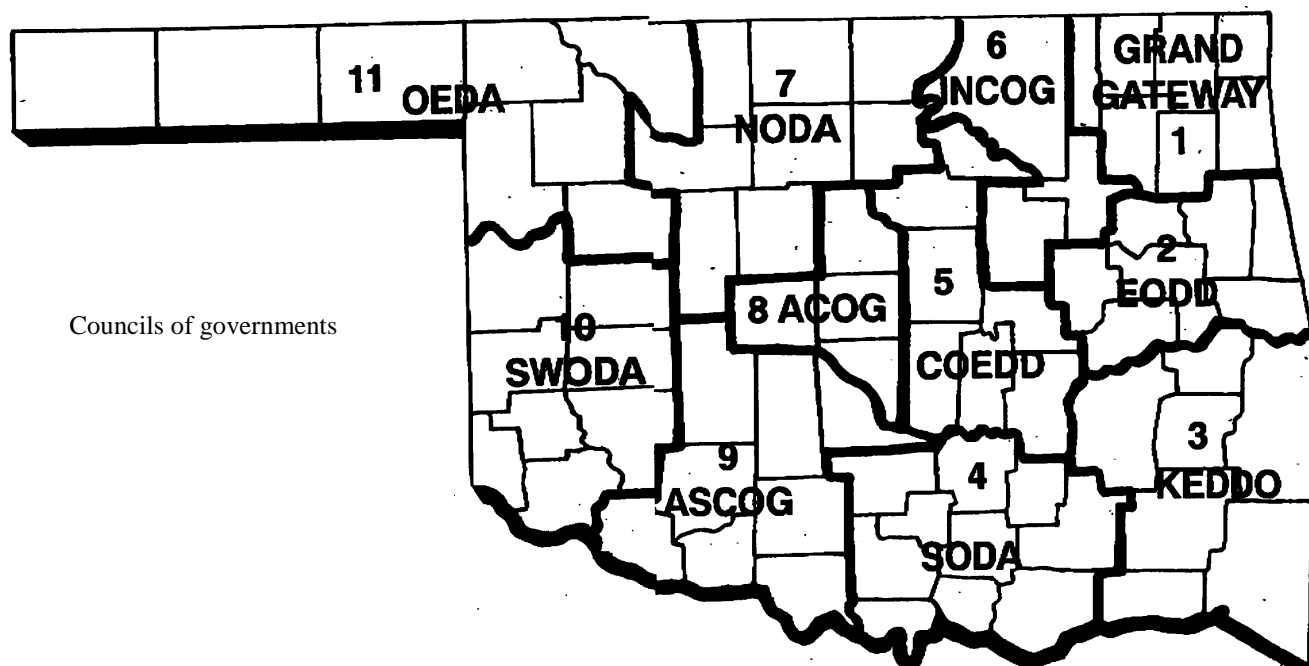
Development districts



Oklahoma



DOT districts



Councils of governments